

CASTLEMAINE NATURALIST

June '82

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AT A LOWAN'S NEST

by John Shaw Neilson

Here, in the rubble and the sand,
This monument by thee was planned:
Great was the love that in thee hid,
O builder of the Pyramid!



By no delerious king compelled
But by the mother heart upheld
Little of pain or toil thou recked
Brave builder! eager architect

This and no other was thy shrine:
This monument to birth was thine:
Great was the love within thee hid'
O builder of the Pyramid!



Regarded by many as Australia's finest poet, Shaw Neilson worked through his life as a laborer in western Victoria. Most of his work was discovered in an old trunk, and published posthumously.

contributed by Ray Bradfield.

Pres; Mr G, Broadway.
Sec : Mrs A. Bruton.
Treas: Mr F. Meyer.
Newsletter: Mrs R. Mills.

LOOKING FOR THE MOUNTAIN RED GUM

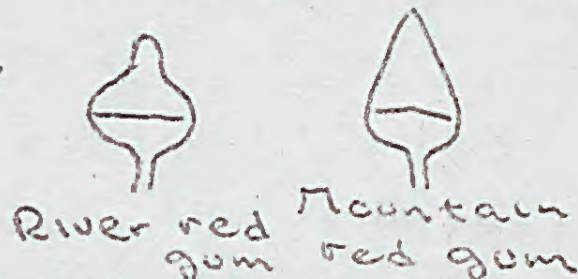
by E.P.

The Mountain Red Gum (also known as *Eucalyptus blakelyi*) is listed as occurring on Mt Tarrengower. But where?

I have been on several expeditions looking for it, the most recent with a party from the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club. We divided into groups and walked right around the mountain, without success. We found yellow box, grey gum, and lots of long-leaf box. Down at the base are some River red gum.

Mountain red gum should be easy to recognise. It looks like a small river red gum; it has similar bark, and usually the habit of growth is quite similar.

The buds are different. Instead of the beaked cap of the river red gum, the mountain red gum caps are long and conical.



Mountain red gum is commonly found on the granite ranges of northern Victoria, where it is a small tree. In N.S.W. I have seen much larger specimens, where the trees grow in less hilly spots.

1982 Film Night

A good crowd at the last meeting enjoyed the films "Reefs of Steel" - a study of wild life around oil drilling platforms in Bass Strait- "The Wanderer Butterfly", (both from B.P. at short notice) "Water against Wildfire" - which was a practical, teaching film showing how the Forest Commission deals with a fire, and "Encounter Lake Tyers", a dated, but enjoyable film about a group of aboriginal and Melbourne schoolboys on a 10 day water sports camp at Lake Tyers.

Some interesting reports came in, especially regarding birds. The Barkers Creek list has increased by 7, and now includes the Painted Quail. Willy Wagtails were reported to be nesting right in the town, Eastern Shrike-tits were seen at Campbells Creek, and Babblers and Zebra Finches at the Castlemaine Golf course.

A large flock of Little Corellas was also reported flying over North Castlemaine and Barkers Creek.

Winterbottoms, at their last meeting with us, reported that the "youngest member", Pickles, had spotted an owl at their place.

Max and Ruth have been members since the inception of the Club in 1976 and Max has served several terms as vice-President, and as Secretary. Ruth has stayed in the background, quietly going about the task of organizing supper and helpers. They will be missed by the Club, but we hope to see them occasionally when they visit. We wish them well in their new life in Mornington.

The Grebes

Geoff Sitch reported on the second clutch of eggs of the Grebes on their dam had laid. Four eggs were laid, but only two hatched due to the heavy rain in March, which raised the water level of the dam too quickly for the nest to float up with the rise, and the two unhatched eggs washed away.

The male bird chased off the first five one at a time for them to find a new territory of their own.

The parents each raised one of the new clutch, but father bird's protegee grew to twice the size of the mother bird's. When the male disappeared for a while the mother bird did not recognise 'his' chick and it died of neglect.

The male returned for a while, but has now left for good. The hen bird eventually deserted 'her' chick, too, and it also died. She has stayed on the dam, so apparently it is her territory, and the male comes to the female's territory for the breeding season.

From the Committee

Mrs Merri Lindsay, due to family commitments, has found it necessary to resign as club Secretary. The Committee regretfully accepted her resignation.

Mrs Audrey Bruton, aided by Stan, will be the new Secretary.

Another social evening and fund raising night is planned for August when we plan to see "The Man from Snowy River". For a group discount at least 20 people are needed. The last evening of this sort was very successful and by all accounts extremely enjoyable. Frank Meyer will be in charge of arrangements again.

Excursion Programme

Friday June 11 Members and visitors night. If possible, bring a few nature slides, exhibits etc.

Thurs June 24 Business meeting.

Fri July 9th Local Geology
Speaker will be Mr W. Priestley.

Thurs July 22 Business meeting.

Friday Aug 13 To be arranged.

Meetings are held at the Castlemaine Education Centre, Mostyn St., (in the SEC building), starting at 8.00 p.m.

Visitors are welcome at the club's sessions.



Subscription rates

Family \$ 5.00
Single \$ 3.00
Student/junior \$1.00
Supporting \$ 10.00

Sat June 12th Fungi Leave Education Centre at 1.30 sharp. Venue is Firth Park, Trentham East, to look for Fungi.

Take your overcoat!

Leaders - Mrs R Mills,
Mrs E. Elliott

Sat July 10th Local Geology

Leader: Clive Willman.

Leave Ed. Centre at 1.30 sharp.

Fri 31 July-Sun Aug 1 Ocean Grove

Western Vic Field Nat. Clubs Assn.
camp-out, hosted by Geelong FNC.

Sat 14 th. Mosquito Flat

Leader - Miss M. Oliver

Sat 11th September Werona.

Leaders- Mr G Sitch, Mr F Meyer.
Mon 20 September Annual show-day
walk. Possibly Porcupine Ridge. Time and place to be confirmed.

Sun Oct 3 Fryers Ridge Meet at 10.30 at the Market car park. Joint excursion with Bendigo F.N.C.

Sun Oct 17 Stuart Mill with the Maryborough F.N.C.

Sat Oct 23-Sun Oct 24 Creswick
W.V.F.N.C.A. campout at Creswick, hosted by the Creswick F.N.C.

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Regarding the animal on the front of the May issue Geoff Sitch reported that a short nosed Bandicoot was seen not far from the Red, White and Blue mine during a S.G.A.P. outing to Muckleford, which he lead, three years ago, so it seems that the animal could well have been the Short Nosed Bandicoot, as suggested.